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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/267,631	03/15/1999	MASASHI AONUMA	Q53632	7331

7590 12/03/2003

SUGHRUE MION ZINN MACPEAK & SEAS
2100 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE NW
WASHINGTON, DC 20037

EXAMINER

LAMB, TWYLER MARIE

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2622

DATE MAILED: 12/03/2003

8

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/267,631

Applicant(s)

AONUMA ET AL.

Examiner

Twyler M. Lamb

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 25 April 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-4,9-14 and 19-21 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-4,9-14 and 19-21 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- 1) ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - 2) ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - 3) ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application) since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121 since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☒ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

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DETAILED ACTION

Priority

1. Receipt is acknowledged of papers submitted under 35 U.S.C. 119(a)-(d), which papers have been placed of record in the file.

Election/Restrictions

2. Applicant's election without traverse of claims 1-4, 11-14 and 21 in Paper No. 7 is acknowledged.

Applicant also requested that claims 9-10 and 19-20 be included in Group I.

Examiner acknowledges this request.

The non-elected claims 5-8, 15-18 and 22-35 have been canceled.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

3. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

4. Claims 3-4 and 13-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

5. Claim 3 recites the limitation "the interface unit" in line 9. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim. It is unclear, as to which of the "at least two interface units" the applicant is referring.

Claim 13 recites the limitation "the interface unit" in line 9. There is insufficient

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antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim. It is unclear as to which of the "at least two interface units" the applicant is referring.

Claims 4 and 14 depend on a rejected base claim.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

6. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent, or on an international application by another who has fulfilled the requirements of paragraphs (1), (2), and (4) of section 371(c) of this title before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent.

The changes made to 35 U.S.C. 102(e) by the American Inventors Protection Act of 1999 (AIPA) and the Intellectual Property and High Technology Technical Amendments Act of 2002 do not apply when the reference is a U.S. patent resulting directly or indirectly from an international application filed before November 29, 2000. Therefore, the prior art date of the reference is determined under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) prior to the amendment by the AIPA (pre-AIPA 35 U.S.C. 102(e)).

7. Claims 1-2, 9, 11-12, 19 and 21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Endo et al. (Endo) (US 6,335,796).

With regard to claims 1, 11 and 21, Endo discloses an interfacing method, wherein a plurality of network printers (laser printers 6 -8; printers 56-58), which are provided with different kinds of film for image reproduction (col 4, line 4, line 61 – col 5, line 12; col 9, lines 48-51), are connected by an interface unit (Interface 13; Interface

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66) (col 4, lines 53-60; col 9, line 63 – col 10, line 3) to an image information network (LAN 5; LAN 55) (col 4, lines 24-38; col 9, lines 48-51), the method comprising the steps of: i) recognizing available kinds of film with respect to each of the network printers, which are connected to the interface unit (col 4, line 4, line 61 – col 5, line 51), ii) selecting a network printer, which is among the plurality of the network printers and which corresponds to a kind of film coinciding with an output request, in accordance with the results of said recognition (col 6, lines 14-51), and iii) giving an output instruction, which coincides with said output request, to the thus selected network printer (col 6, lines 1-13).

With regard to claims 2 and 12, Endo also discloses wherein, in cases where there is no network printer, which corresponds to the kind of film coinciding with said output request (which reads on some of the printers not being available and some film sizes not available) (col 4, line 61 – col 5, line 67), a network printer (printer 6), which corresponds to the kind of film closest to the kind of film coinciding with said output request, is selected as the network printer (col 6, lines 7-13), which corresponds to the kind of film coinciding with said output request, and an output instruction, which specifies said closest kind of film, is given as said output instruction, which coincides with said output request, to the thus selected network printer (col 6, lines 1-13).

With regard to claims 9 and 19, Endo also discloses wherein, in cases where each of the network printers connected to the interface unit is designed to send a monitor signal, which represents a state concerning output, in accordance with a special-purpose protocol (col 4, line 4, line 61 – col 5, line 12; col 9, lines 48-51), and

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each of a plurality of terminals, which constitute the image information network, is provided with general-purpose displaying software functions and operates under management with one of plural kinds of operating systems having different forms, said monitor signal having been sent in accordance with said special-purpose protocol is converted into a signal according to a protocol, which is adapted to displaying with said displaying software functions (col 4, lines 23-30; col 4, lines 39 – col 6, line 14).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

8. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

9. Claims 3-4 and 13-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Endo et al. (Endo) (US 6,335,796) in view of Mori (US 6,070,000).

With regard to claims 3 and 13, Endo discloses an interfacing method, wherein a plurality of network printers (laser printers 6 -8; printers 56-58), which are provided with different kinds of film for image reproduction (col 4, line 4, line 61 – col 5, line 12; col 9, lines 48-51), are connected by an interface unit (Interface 13; Interface 66) (col 4, lines 53-60; col 9, line 63 – col 10, line 3) to an image information network (LAN 5; LAN 55) (col 4, lines 24-38; col 9, lines 48-51), the method comprising the steps of: i) recognizing available kinds of film with respect to each of the network printers, which

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are connected to the interface unit (col 4, line 4, line 61 – col 5, line 51), ii) selecting a network printer, which is among the plurality of the network printers and which corresponds to a kind of film coinciding with an output request, in accordance with the results of said recognition (col 6, lines 14-51), and iii) giving an output instruction, which coincides with said output request, to the thus selected network printer (col 6, lines 1-13).

Endo does not teach wherein at least one network printer among a plurality of network printers is connected by each of at least two interface units to an image information network; sending information, which represents the results of said recognition, to the other interface unit.

Mori discloses a printing method that includes at least one network printer among a plurality of network printers is connected by each of at least two interface units to an image information network (col 3, lines 40-48); sending information, which represents the results of said recognition, to the other interface unit (col 4, lines 1-14).

There fore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have modified Endo to include wherein at least one network printer among a plurality of network printers is connected by each of at least two interface units to an image information network; sending information, which represents the results of said recognition, to the other interface unit as taught by Mori. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have modified Endo by the teaching of Mori to provide the user with optional printers to print the data as taught by Mori in col 4, lines 1-26.

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With regard to claims 4 and 14, Endo as modified also discloses wherein, in cases where there is no network printer, which corresponds to the kind of film coinciding with said output request (which reads on some of the printers not being available and some film sizes not available) (col 4, line 61 – col 5, line 67), a network printer (printer 6), which corresponds to the kind of film closest to the kind of film coinciding with said output request, is selected as the network printer (col 6, lines 7-13), which corresponds to the kind of film coinciding with said output request, and an output instruction, which specifies said closest kind of film, is given as said output instruction, which coincides with said output request, to the thus selected network printer (col 6, lines 1-13).

10. Claims 10 and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Endo et al. (Endo) (US 6,335,796) in view of McCormack et al. (McCormack) (US 6,295,527).

With regard to claims 10 and 20, Endo does not clearly teach wherein said special-purpose protocol is a Simple Network Management Protocol, said displaying software functions is a World Wide Web browser, and said protocol adapted to displaying with said displaying software functions is a HyperText Transfer Protocol.

McCormack discloses a network management system that includes wherein said special-purpose protocol is a Simple Network Management Protocol (col 1, lines 36-50), said displaying software functions is a World Wide Web browser (col 6, lines 34-41), and said protocol adapted to displaying with said displaying software functions is a HyperText Transfer Protocol (col 5, lines 41-61).

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There fore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have modified Endo to include wherein said special-purpose protocol is a Simple Network Management Protocol, said displaying software functions is a World Wide Web browser, and said protocol adapted to displaying with said displaying software functions is a HyperText Transfer Protocol as taught by McCormack. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have modified Endo by the teaching of McCormack to monitor the status of devices in a network as taught by McCormack in col 1, lines 36-50.

11. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Twyler Lamb whose telephone number is 703 - 308-8823. The examiner can normally be reached on M-TH (8:30-5:00).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Edward L Coles can be reached on 703-308-4712. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-872-9306 for regular communications and 703-872-9314 for After Final communications.

Any response to this action should be mailed to:

Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks

Washington, DC 20231

or faxed to:

(703) 872-9314

(for informal or draft communications, such as proposed amendments to be


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discussed at an interview; please label such communications "PROPOSED" or
"DRAFT")

or hand-carried to:

Crystal Park Two
2121 Crystal Drive
Arlington, VA.
Sixth Floor (Receptionist)

Twyler Lamb



November 29, 2003